



**United States Department of the Interior  
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
Fire Management Branch  
National Interagency Fire Center  
3833 South Development Avenue  
Boise, Idaho 83705**



Instructional Memorandum 2006-001-Amended  
Expiration Date: 12/31/06

To: Regional Fire Management Coordinators  
Casual Pay Specialists  
AD Approving Officials  
Regional Fire Administrative Officers

From: Acting Chief, Branch of Fire Management

Subject: Department of Interior 2006 Pay Plan for Emergency Workers

**Program Area:** Incident Business Management

**Purpose:** The purpose of this Instruction Memorandum (IM) is to authorize and provide direction, using the attached Department of the Interior (DOI) 2006 Administratively Determined (AD) Pay Plan, to hire emergency workers (casuals).

**Timeframe:** The attached DOI AD Pay Plan is forwarded for immediate implementation. It became effective on March 28, 2006 and will expire on December 31, 2006. An amendment was issued on April 3, 2006 which corrected the rate for AD-L in Alaska.

**Budget Impact:** Unknown. The impact of the attached pay plan on the budget is dependent on the severity of the upcoming fire season, the number of other emergency incidents and the frequency of use of the pay plan to pay emergency workers.

**Policy/Action:** This attached pay plan applies wherever and whenever it becomes necessary to hire persons –

- To cope with a sudden and unexpected emergency caused by a fire, or extreme fire potential, flood, storm, or any other emergency that threatens damage to federally protected property unless brought under immediate control.
- To provide emergency assistance to State Foresters under formalized cooperative agreements.
- To meet mission assignments issued by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

- To supplement regular personnel assigned to prescribed fire projects (*this does not include Mechanical or Chemical Reduction Projects*).

The AD Pay Plan is complete within itself; therefore, all provisions for any hiring under this plan take precedence over any other policies or regulations that may be prescribed elsewhere.

Units may hire only those individuals within their 'local area of responsibility' who are qualified for the position and certified to assist in fire suppression operations and/or other emergency that threatens damage to federally protected property.

**This pay plan may not be used to circumvent other hiring authorities nor used to fill vacant government positions (i.e., FMO, AFMO, Dispatch Center Manager, etc).** Those hired outside of the 2006 AD pay authority **will not** be paid through the Casual Payment Center. If the AD Hiring Authority was not the proper mechanism for hire, other means such as "DeFacto" employment, will need to be explored through Human Resources.

### **2006 Rates**

The leveling and rates establishment processes were validated by the Office of Personnel Management, therefore, all rates for 2006 changed from 2005 with exception of pay bands G, H, and I. Rates in pay bands G, H, and I are frozen at the 2005 AD Pay Plan level. These rates will remain frozen until the formula calculation aligns with the annual cost of living adjustments.

Through the leveling process the pay levels were expanded from five to twelve. Rates are determined according to the job performed. Lengths of service and/or additional qualifications are not used to determine pay rate.

If a casual employee was hired before the approved effective date of the 2006 AD Pay Plan (March 28, 2006), then the 2005 AD Pay Plan rate under which the casual was originally hired **will remain in effect throughout the duration of the assignment.**

### **Background Investigations**

Due to Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD) 12, DOI is now requiring NACI (National Agency Check with Inquiries) background investigations for those casual employees who will need access to any DOI networked computer systems or controlled facilities (level 3 or 4). At a minimum, the National Criminal History Fingerprint Check (FBI FP) portion of a NACI must be completed prior to issuance of any credential, meaning the casual employee can be hired only once their fingerprints have cleared. However, the completion and successful adjudication of a full NACI is still required.

Hiring Officials need to coordinate with their Human Resource office to accomplish this process. NACI charges for casual employees will go against suppression operations funds.

### **Exception Positions**

The 2006 AD Pay Plan has added verbiage (Section F – Position Classifications) to address positions not listed in the Incident Positions Matrix. An exception position may be established to meet a local need (for use within the local/geographic area) at the AD-A, AD-B, AD-F, AD-I and AD-K rate by the delegated hiring official **only** if none of the positions listed in the Position Matrix fit the scope of duties for the position needed AND the scope of a current emergency warrants such a need. The pay plan provides classification guidelines for determining what level a new position may be established. A brief description of duties must accompany the Emergency Firefighter Time Record, Form OF-288 for audit purposes. **The Branch of Fire Management must review/approve any exceptions for the 2006 season.**

### **Incident Position Matrix**

The positions listed in the Incident Position Matrix which are found in the Wildland Fire Qualifications System Guide (PMS 310-1) are designated with an asterisk in the 310-1 column. Individuals must possess a current agency issued incident qualification card (Red Card) showing specific qualifications for the position in which they are hired.

### **Minimum Service Standards**

All casual employees who perform wildland or prescribed fire duties on the fire line must have completed 32 hours of basic wildland fire training, including the following:

- S-130 Basic Firefighter
- S-190 Introduction to Fire Behavior
- Fire shelter training
- An annual 8 hour safety refresher course
- Must meet the arduous fitness standard

Refer to Chapter 13 of the Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations Handbook, NFES 2724, for complete details on training and qualifications.

### **Hiring Casuals to Attend Emergency Incident Training**

Units may hire casuals to attend training in preparation for emergency incidents (e.g., ICS courses and Refresher Training). In most cases this should not exceed a total of 80 hours per calendar year, regardless of hiring agency. This authority cannot be used to circumvent other hiring authorities such as temporary 1039 appointments or career seasonal appointments. Required annual refresher courses and travel to and from the training is included in the 80 hour limitation. It is the hiring unit's responsibility to monitor training hours via the Casual Pay Datamart.

Suppression operation funds are to be used for operational costs directly associated with the preparation, delivery or support of emergency incident related training for emergency firefighter crew and support personnel (single resource casual). Allowable operational costs are limited to:

- casual wages for attending emergency incident training
- training materials
- transportation of casual and regular government personnel, including commercial transportation, contract transportation, government aircraft
- regular government employee overtime (use hours code 110 only; the use of hours code 113 is not appropriate)
- casual and regular government employee travel expenses (per diem).

Hiring units will use their office organizational code with **9141-AZA1**.

### **Hiring Casuals to Instruct Emergency Incident Training**

Units may hire casuals to instruct emergency incident training **only** when all other methods of hiring and contracting instructors have been exhausted; not to exceed a total of 120 hours including travel per calendar year, regardless of hiring agency. Salary, travel and per diem may be charged to 9141-AZA1 when a casual is hired to conduct emergency incident training for casuals. Hiring units will maintain, for audit purposes, some type of documentation that identifies what other methods were explored and exhausted prior to hiring a casual to instruct training. The documentation should be attached to the Single Resource Casual Hire Form kept at the hiring unit.

### **Hiring Casuals to Carry Out Emergency Stabilization (ES) Work**

Emergency stabilization is defined as a “planned action” allowing emergency stabilization activities to be undertaken within one year of the incident. **In reference to using the AD Pay Plan for emergency stabilization, the "emergency" phase occurs during the incident, and for a period of time directly after.** During this time it would be appropriate to hire casual personnel until regular government employees can handle the situation and/or other employment methods can be initiated. However, if there is a break in activities (i.e., the fire was contained in August and additional stabilization is needed in December) units **may not** utilize the pay plan authority as efforts should be made to contract or detail regular government employees to accomplish the work.

Casuals may be hired using the pay plan, not to exceed 90 days, **directly following** a natural emergency to develop plans and manage an emergency stabilization effort **only until** regular employees can handle the situation or other employment methods can be initiated.

### **Hiring Casuals for Support**

Units may hire casuals to provide support in the way of dispatch, warehouse/cache workers, payment team members, or administrative support to include post-incident administration. Post-incident administration should not exceed 90 days and should occur **directly** following the incident.

### **Hiring for Prescribed Fire Projects**

The pay plan may be used to provide temporary support due to the unpredictable nature of prescribed fire activities. **This does not include Mechanical or Chemical Reduction Projects.** The term of hire is restricted to no greater than the period beginning 24 hours prior to planned ignition and extending through 24 hours after the perimeter is secured and no greater than 300 hours per calendar year per person, regardless of agency. It is the hiring unit's responsibility to monitor prescribed fire hours via the Casual Pay Datamart. The time record should only reflect charges to sub activities 9263 and 9264. This authority may not be used to circumvent normal hiring and contracting procedures.

### **Single Resource Casual Hire Information Form (SRCHF)**

Hiring officials will complete the Single Resource Casual Hire Information Form (PMS 934) at the time of hire, obtain the casual's signature, and maintain the SRCHF at the hiring unit. The Single Resource Casual Hire Form is not required for payment purposes.

### **Incident Behavior Responsibilities**

Casuals are required to adhere to established incident behavior responsibilities and may be released if inappropriate behavior occurs. Hiring units are responsible to provide the Incident Behavior form (PMS 935-1 (English) PMS 935-2 (Spanish)) to casuals at the initial hiring for their information and signature. The original form will be retained at the hiring office and a copy will be provided to the casual.

### **Hiring Unit Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of the hiring unit to:

- Maintain casual hiring documents in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552a, the Privacy Act.
- Coordinate with Human Resources for application of HSPD 12 as it applies to hiring casuals.
- Process Workers Compensation claims. Casuals are covered under the Federal Employee's Compensation Act (5U.S.C. 81) which authorizes medical care and compensation for periods of disability for casuals who sustain traumatic injuries and occupational diseases in the performance of duty.
- Process personal Property Loss/Property Damage claims.
- Issue authorization to travel and process claims for travel expense reimbursement.
- Review time report (OF-288) and approve for payment.

### **Casual Payment Procedures**

The processing of Emergency Firefighter payroll for casuals hired by the Fish & Wildlife Service will be done out of the centralized Casual Payment Center (reference current IM 2005-001).

**Manual/Handbook Sections Affected:** This Pay Plan replaces all previously approved plans found in Exhibit 01 of Chapter 10 of the Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook.

**Coordination:** This Administratively Determined Pay Plan was coordinated with the other DOI Wildland Fire Management Agencies.

**Contact:** Questions should be addressed to Deb Aiken at (208) 387-5536 or Amy Kishpaugh at (208) 387-5502.

Attachment:  
DOI Pay Plan for Emergency Workers (Casuals)